

Jane's Financial Embarrassment

By HELENA SMITH-DAYTON

"Violets!" sniffed Jane, opening the lavender box with none of the enthusiasm she usually displayed on such occasions. "Of course it never would have occurred to the extravagant unknown admirer to send 50 cents' worth of postage stamps instead!"

Jane glanced toward her desk, where a neat pile of brown envelopes stared her reproachfully in the face. "An entire week's work held up because the brilliant young writer, Jane Gaylord, lacks the necessary postage!" she groaned. "As it's all timely stuff, and special orders—I may as well destroy it unless it goes today. I may as well give up looking for that check and do something desperate." Jane paced up and down the apartment trying to think of a method to obtain the trifling sum at once.

"Ask your mother for 50 cents to see the elephant jump the fence," she repeated for the hundredth time. The silly jingle refused to be dislodged from her head. "There I go again. If it were only \$50 I could hustle around and get it—but 50 cents! It seemed as if a mocking voice echoed, 'To see the elephant jump the fence!'"

"Of course," she went on sarcastically. "I might waylay little children and steal the pennies from their moist palms, or I could make these violets into small bunches and sell them on the street corner—dower girl in a tailor suit and Paris hat would be a novelty! There must be some way of raising 50 cents without selling my possessions. I never approved of letting the pawnshop habit—it's hard to shake, once acquired. I don't like to let a little fifty-cent-to-see-the-elephant get the best of me."

"Why, I won't need another penny until my check comes. My board is paid in advance, and before anything is due there'll be lots of checks. But I must have 50 cents to see—"

Jane stopped impatiently, and, as if the narrow confines of her own room were stifling her, she opened the door and stepped into the hall. She paused as voices from the upper landing floated down to her. She always paused when she heard Peter Gleason's deep tones.

"Here's a dollar," he was saying. "Run over to Carter's and buy me three or four magazines. Haven't seen one for a month, so anything you get will be new to me. And you may keep the change, John."

"Thank you, Mr. Gleason," came John's squeaky answer. "I'll be back with 'em in a jiffy." He came down the stairs two at a time.

"John!" called Miss Gaylord softly. "I'm on an errand for Mr. Gleason, but when I get back—"

"Yes, yes! It's about that!" she interrupted. "I want you to do me a particular favor, John. It's all right, but rather unusual. I have some new magazines—the very ones Mr. Gleason would like. I've more than I can read. It would save you a trip out in the storm—the magazines are really just as new as you could buy at the store. Would you—buy them from me?"

It was out at last. Jane never had felt so shy of any one in her life as she did of the astonished little hall boy.

"Sure, Miss Gaylord," he said without hesitation. "I'd do anything for you. It's on the level, ain't it?"

"Yes, John, strictly on the level," she answered, with a little laugh that suggested tears.

"Have 'em ready when I come back," he whispered.

"You are a dear boy," cried Jane. She fled back to her room in a panic of nervousness at what she had done. She selected several magazines of recent issue and, was back at the door long before the return of the boy.

"If I was back with the books too soon he'd get on to it," was his naive explanation.

"And, John," she pleaded in a voice that shook, "please give him this box of violets. Don't tell him who sent them. But he has been so ill, poor man! You see, it will give good measure for the 50 cents."

John nodded wisely and took his way upward.

"Good boy, John," she heard Gleason say a moment later. "Couldn't have made a better selection myself. Violets too? No name given? You won't tell? Very well if you promised not to, of course."

Back in his study Gleason tossed the violets carelessly on a table already loaded with flowers and took up a magazine eagerly.

"I hope my little Jane has a story in this month," he said, scanning the table of contents. He passed his own name, but Jane's was not there. He took up another, and again was disappointed, but in the third magazine Jane's name headed the list. He was turning to her story when a sheet of paper fluttered out. On the closely written page his own name caught his eye. Naturally he read every word, though it was obviously part of a letter.

"You remember," it ran, "how I used to read about Peter Gleason and his work? Strange that he should come to board at Mrs. Stuart's and be taken so ill almost immediately after—and that I should have the privilege of assisting his trained nurse when he was unconscious. Yes, he is all I imagined him—and more. If you must know the worst, I—no, I can't write it to even you, Mollie. But put romantic ideas out of your head, just as your silly old Jane must, for Peter Gleason

is indifferent, and I'm very busy, as usual. But—" That was all.

"Bless her!" whispered Peter over and over. "And I thought her too wrapped up in her work to give me a thought. Helped to nurse me, did she? My little Jane! And she must have sent these magazines—and the violets! And John, the scamp, never told me! But, on the other hand, John is such an honest little chap he wouldn't have kept that 50 cents. If he really bought them, how came that letter between the pages of a magazine from Carter's?"

Then in spite of himself a doubt flashed into his mind. Was it a clever ruse—was the letter placed there by design? Peter was not cynical, but there had been so many traps laid for him! Slowly he placed the paper on the coals in the grate and watched it burn.

"If she didn't intend me to see that, it would break her heart if she knew. And when I tell her I love her she might think it was only pity because I had discovered her secret. I won't believe it was a plot, little Jane."

Two days later a timid tap came at the door of Gleason's study.

"Ja—Miss Gaylord!" he cried enthusiastically. "Why haven't you been up to see an invalid before this? Such rank neglect!" He took her hand and refused to let it go for some moments. "Aren't you sorry?"

"Here's your 50 cents," she began desperately. "My check just came and"— Looking up suddenly, she met his questioning eyes. Recklessly she explained the humiliating details of the transaction. "I would so gladly have given them to you," she ended up, with a scarlet face. "And I shall be very unhappy unless you take the 50 cents."

Peter was radiant. Unconsciously Jane had vindicated herself from suspicion regarding the letter. "But you sent violets," he reminded. "I sent the violets along to take the curse off," she admitted, "but someone I know not who—sent them to me first."

"Merely to take the curse off?" he queried. "Not because you had a little sentiment for the invalid? Then you deserve to be punished with the truth! I sent those violets to you!"

"Oh!" cried Jane, hiding her face. "Oh!"

"But hereafter," he said sternly, "I want the right to furnish your blessed postage stamps!"

"Oh!" murmured Jane.

Wise Ostrich.

The stock illustration of what a fool will do is the habit which ostriches have of sticking the head into the sand, leaving the body exposed, but the author of "The Gold Diggings of Cape Horn" says that this habit does not seem foolish to one who studies the ostrich in its desert home. On the contrary, it is nature's wise provision for the safety of the bird in a region where hiding places are scarce. The ostrich batches out the eggs, looks after the brood, keeps his eyes open for men, beasts and birds and sounds a loud snoring, warning call when he sees an enemy. The brood, when warned, fades out of sight. Each chick signals motionless, its head in the sand and its body so near in color to that of the sand and scant herbage as to deceive even an experienced hunter. Its body looks like a gray desert bush, and the gauchos—the cowboys of the pampas—when searching for young ostriches examine every bush within many rods of the spot where a brood disappears. Often what seemed a bush is found to be in part or wholly a young ostrich. With its head up the bird would be at once detected. With its head in the sand it often escapes even the keen eyed fox.

Whistler Tamed a Russian.

When James MacNeill Whistler went to Venice to make those fourteen famous etchings of his he became so intoxicated with its beauty that he made seventy pastels first, leaving his etchings till the last few days. These pastels made a tremendous sensation. All the art world of Venice was carried away with enthusiasm excepting a Russian painter, who declared them tricks, betting a basketful of champagne he could paint six not to be distinguished from them. Mr. Whistler amiably gave some of his paper and six pastels, which were finally mixed up with those by the Russian and submitted to a jury which had seen none of them. Mr. Whistler's pastels were unmistakable, and the Russian lost. A few days later the two met on the Rialto, and Mr. Whistler laughed a little about the bet. The Russian was furious. "You forget, sir," he said, "that I'm a Russian, and if you scratch one you find a Tartar underneath." "Oh, no, you have it wrong," said Mr. Whistler; "you have it wrong. I scratched an artist and found an amateur."—Philadelphia Record.

Written on Glass.

Miss Harriet Auber's beautiful lines, "Our Blessed Redeemer, Ere He Breathed," were written by the authoress on a window pane in her house at Huddesdon. A dealer in curios tried to purchase this interesting and peculiar manuscript from the owner of the house after the death of Miss Auber in 1863, but he was unsuccessful. The pane of glass was subsequently stolen, and it has never since been found or its fate discovered.

Centuries ago Theodolph, bishop of Orleans, while in prison at Metz composed the hymn, "All Glory, Laud and Honor," which he wrote on the window of his cell. As the usual Palm Sunday procession passed through the town the emperor heard sounds of singing proceeding from the prison. He thereupon liberated the bishop, whose hymn was afterward regularly sung on each succeeding Palm Sunday as a professional choir taking up each quatrain and the public joining in singing the chorus.

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Is Will Be an Odd Looking Creature.

According to This Forecast.
"Many persons consider the cane as the plaything of the dandy and an unnecessary article carried by men unless it is used as an aid in walking when one is lame or infirm, but the use of the cane has a deeper significance than this, even though it may be used as a sporting adjunct to a man's get up," said a gentleman connected with the Smithsonian Institution.

"The cane is a relic from prehistoric ages, when men went around clad in the skins of animals and the club was the only weapon of assault and defense. Those of our ancient ancestors who wielded the big knotted stick to the best advantage over their opponents came out the victors. The club saw honored service for some centuries, when it was superseded by the stone ax, which was the same old club, with an end fastened to the stone ax by thongs of rawhide, until, a few centuries later, some old white bearded patriarch conceived the idea of drilling a hole through the stone ax head and inserting the end of the club therein. Then the primitive metal ages were reached, and crudely wrought metal ax heads took the place of the stone. Then the club developed into the short spear, and the short spear evolved into the short sword, which as time rolled along became the long sword, and finally into the sharp, slender blade which was man's constant companion for so many centuries.

"And now it is the cane, for the primal instinct of man for having within reach and in his hand something to carry for possible attack or defense has not yet been blotted out by civilization and consequent refinement of manners and customs, for the cane is still carried as a weapon of assault and defense, especially at night, even though many men use it as a plaything, an article in the nature of personal adornment or a badge of the man who does not have to work for a living, as once the light sword was carried by the dandies of the time as the badge of the gentleman."

"As the centuries roll on the cane will take its place in museums as an interesting relic of our own times, and antiquaries will vie with one another for fine specimens as they do today over perfect specimens of the other still existing relics of past ages. Then our teeth will go in the process of the physical evolution, and perfect specimens of a full set of what were once used for the then unnecessary process of eating will be viewed with interest and wonder by the frequenters of museums. After our teeth will disappear our toes, like the toes from the foot of the prehistoric horse. Our fingers will last the longer, as they are used more than the toes, but they will gradually shorten and finally disappear from the hand as the centuries slowly pile one upon another. Of course the hair on our heads will disappear by the process of physical evolution long before our toes and our fingers, and the evolved hairless cranium man will look with mirth upon the hairy headed man of today, for the beard, too, will have disappeared by that time.

"Upon the whole, we will do well to utilize what we have now, for it cannot be said that the future looks especially encouraging for us from the standpoint of today. We will seem as odd a set of creatures to those who are to come after us, about 10,000 centuries from now, as they seem to us today in our mind's picture of what they will be. We should not, however, let these minor matters of evolution interfere with our appetite or our sleep."—Washington Star.

The Little Knowledge Is Dangerous.
An imperfect or warped understanding of machinery and of processes and ignorance of what is being or has been accomplished are flooding the world with worthless inventions which waste both hopes and money. Good technical museums in the great centers of population and industry would doubtless have a correcting and also a chastening effect and help to bring men of over-bubbling self appreciation to realize the fact that, barring accidents, it takes a good working knowledge of any particular industry to effect a reform of any commercial value in that industry. Thousands upon thousands of ideas are patented every year in utter disregard of the processes of manufacture which would have to be employed to produce the articles, and many of these patents, far from making an advance in any art, are really steps backward on the road of progress and represent a waste of legitimate mental energy which might be more profitably expended. "Novelty" is the cry. But breaks are mostly novelties.—Alfred Sang in Engineering Magazine.

Today's Troubles.

It is always worth while to see the bright side of things. We mostly have a desire to grieve over spilt milk, and that we start the habit in early childhood is clear from the number of maxims that combined wisdom and comfort of the nursery have produced. "What can't be cured must be endured," however incontrovertible it may be, is somewhat Spartan in its application, and the admonition not to "make mountains out of molehills" is far less easy to practice than to preach. Hardly cheerful on the face of it is the encouraging motto, "Never mind; it will be all the same a hundred years from now," but for all that it contains a germ of true philosophy. We should be halfway toward equanimity if we could only realize how trivial and how transitory are many of the things we worry over. Real misfortunes must be borne with, but many trifling ones are of our own manufacture, and even tomorrow the things which vex us today in all probability will have ceased to be of account.

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